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ABSTRACT

In this study the efficacy of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory 2 (MMPI-2) was examined with a Colombian college student population. It was projected that the participants would have elevated scales related to psychological distress, marginality, and poor morale, given the current socio-political climate in Columbia. Participants were university students (men=21; women=54) from Bogota, Columbia. Similarities and differences between male and female participants were examined on the Spanish version of the MMPI-2. Three conclusions can be drawn from the results. First, women were more likely to present issues related to interpersonal relationships and physical/somatic complaints, suggesting they are more internally conscious. Second, men were more likely to repress feelings related to anger and hostility and to report a sense of disconnectedness or alienation towards society, implying internalized anger and frustration. Third, differences were found on two of the traditional clinical scales; women obtained higher scores on the Masculinity Femininity and Psycopathic Deviant scales. These elevated scores suggest a more non-traditional sex role attitude in females than their male counterparts, and possible adaptive features to the stress related to their enrollment at the university or their ability to manage stress within Colombian society. (JDM)

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Gender Differences on the MMPI-2 for Colombian University Students

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Introduction

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory 2(MMPI-2) is one of the most widely used instruments in personality-and clinically related research throughout the United States and Latin America. A review of the recent literature indicates a growing body of research on the utilization of the MMPI-2 (in Spanish) in many Latin American countries including Mexico, Argentina, and Chile. The recent work by Butcher (1996) highlights the accomplishments of many researchers in standardizing the MMPI-2 in their respective countries. While such research is flourishing in these countries, there remains an absence of research of other Latin American countries like Colombia.

The purpose of this study was twofold; first to examine the efficacy of the MMPI-2 with a college student population in Colombia, and second, to examine similarities and differences between Colombian men and women on the MMPI-2. Given the current socio-political climate in Columbia, we expected that participants might possibly elevate scales related to psychological distress, marginality, and poor morale.

Method

Participants

The participants of this study were university students from Bogota, Columbia (men =21; women=54). The mean age for participants was 28.5 years, (men = 29.38; women = 28.22) with a standard deviation of 10.67. The participants were administered the Spanish translation of the MMPI-2. Profile validity was determined by the following rule, "Cannot Say" (CS) or omitted items >20 were excluded from the analysis. No profiles were omitted. The validity, clinical, content, supplementary and Harris-Lingoes scales were analyzed. All data was entered into SPSS and analyzed. A T-test for between group differences was conducted and statistical significance

was determined if $p < .05$; clinical significant differences were determined if the difference between the means of the two groups had a T-score greater than 5 points.

Results

Comparisons between the women and men yielded numerous statistically significant differences. For example, women scored significantly higher than males on the *Gender Masculinity* (GM), t (73) = -2.55, $p < .05$, *Masculinity Femininity* (M F), t (73) = -7.48, $p < .05$, *Psychopathic Deviant* (PD), t (73) = -2.23, $p < .05$, *Psychopathic Deviate Subtle* (PD-S), t (73) = -2.03, $p < .05$, *Authority Problems* (PD 2), t (73) = -2.53, $p < .05$. The males obtained higher scales than women scores on *Overcontrolled Hostility* (O-H), t (73) = 2.28, $p < .05$, *Fears* (FRS), t (73) = -2.03, $p < .05$, *Fears 1* (FRS 1), t (73) = 2.84, $p < .05$, *Fears 2* (FRS 2), t (73) = 2.93, $p < .05$, *Gender Feminine* (GF), t (73) = 3.52, $p < .05$. The following graphs illustrate the differences in the mean scores between the groups.

Figure 1: Mean Scores of Males and Females on the MMPI-2 Basic Scales

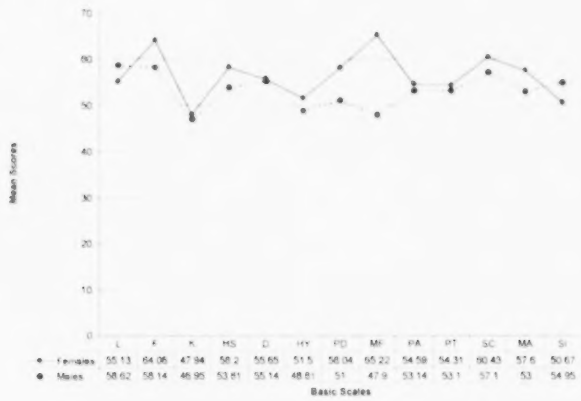

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Figure 2: Mean Scores of Males and Females on the MMPI-2 Supplementary Scales

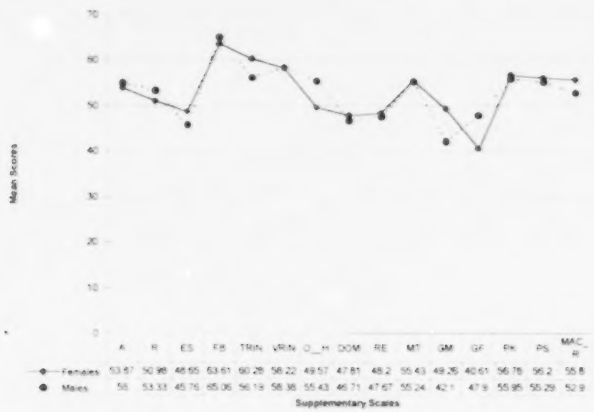

Figure 3: Mean Scores for Males and Females on the MMPI-2 Content Subscales

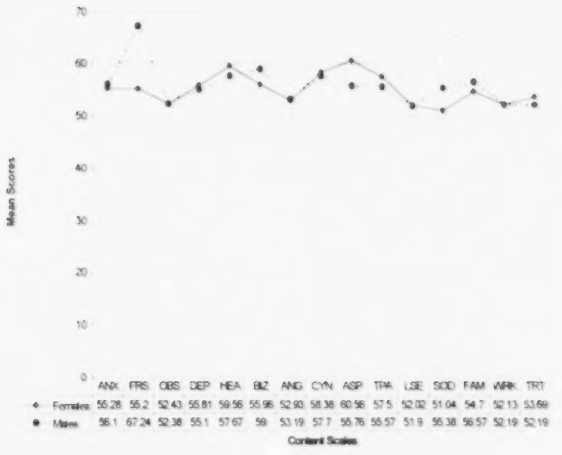

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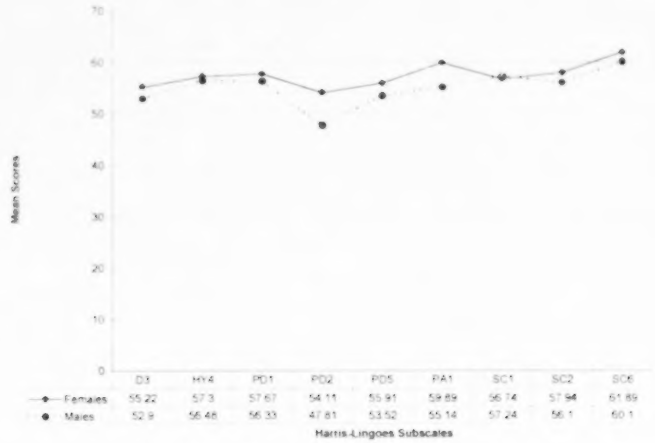
Figure 4: Mean Scores of Males and Females on the MMPI-2 Harris-Lingoes Scales



In addition to statistical significance, clinical significance was evaluated as well. Clinical significance is defined as a difference in 5 T-score points. Illustrated below are the clinical and statistical differences between the two groups.

	Statistically Significant	Clinically Significant
DEP 4		✓
FRS	✓	✓
FRS 1	✓	✓
FRS 2	✓	✓
GF	✓	✓
GM	✓	✓
MF	✓	✓
O_H	✓	✓
PD	✓	✓
PD_S	✓	
PD 2	✓	✓
PD 4		✓
R	✓	
SC 1	✓	
VRIN	✓	

Discussion

Our results led us to the three following conclusions. First, women were more likely to present issues related to interpersonal relationships and physical/somatic complaints. This suggests that women are more internally conscious; this may be due in part to their lack of perceived control of their external environment. Second, men were more likely to repress feelings related to anger and hostility, and to report a sense of disconnectedness or alienation towards society. This implies internalized anger and frustration possibly due to the Colombian environment. Finally, differences were only found on two of the traditional clinical scales. Women were found to obtain higher scores on the Masculinity Femininity and Psychopathic Deviant scales. In fact, women obtained a mean T score of 65.22 on the MF scale. This elevated score suggests a more *non-traditional* sex role attitude than their male counterparts and possible adaptive features to the stress related to enrollment at the university and/or functioning in Colombian society. Higher performance by women on the PD scale possibly reflected interpersonal issues related to managing stress within Colombian society.

References

Butcher, J.N.; (1996). International Adaptations of the MMPI-2. Minneapolis, MN. University of Minnesota Press.